

#### REMARKS

Applicants respectfully request favorable reconsideration of this application, as amended.

The specification has been editorially revised at several points in order to place the application in better condition for issue. The abstract has also been revised to address the Examiner's objection.

As to the claims, the Examiner's indication of allowable subject matter in Claims 3-8 is noted with appreciation. Claims 3, 5, and 6 have been rewritten in independent form, thereby placing Claims 3-8 in condition for issue. Claim 3, as revised, recites that the step portion restricts movement of the canceler, rather than the stop ring, toward the oil pressure piston side.

Without acceding to the rejection of Claims 1 and 2 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e), independent Claim 1 has been amended more particularly to set forth certain distinctive features of Applicants' invention. Specifically, Claim 1 has been amended to recite that the stop ring fall-out preventing means comprises (i) a step portion which is formed on the inner cylindrical member of the clutch case for restricting axial movement of the canceler toward the oil pressure piston side, and (ii) a detention portion, including a detention member formed on the canceler, for restricting size expansion of the stop ring when the

canceler is at a position in which it is stopped by the step portion.

There is no teaching of the aforementioned features of Claim 1 in the Lee patent(USP 6,675,944), which was cited as the basis for the outstanding rejection under § 102(e). Accordingly, Claim 1 distinguishes patentably from Lee and should now be allowed, as should dependent Claim 2.

New Claims 9-16 have been added in order to provide more comprehensive protection for certain aspects of Applicants' invention and are also patentable over the prior art. Regarding independent Claim 9, note, for example, the recitation that the canceler is axially movable toward the oil pressure piston to a limit position at which the movement of the canceler is stopped by a movement restricting member, and the additional recitation that a detention structure is provided having a detention member positioned laterally outwardly of the stop ring to block the stop ring from escaping a recessed portion of the inner cylindrical member of the clutch case when the canceler is at the limit position.

In view of the amendments presented herein, Applicants respectfully submit that this application is in condition for Allowance. An early Notice of Allowance is therefore respectfully solicited.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge to Deposit Account No. 50-1165 any fees under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 and 1.17 that may be required by this paper and to credit any overpayment to that Account. If any extension of time is required in connection with the filing of this paper and has not been requested separately, such extension is hereby requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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